accordingly. That progress in major irrigation has not been rapid is due to the necessity for careful scientific investigation of important irrigation schemes, to ensure that money is wisely spent and the best use made of the water available. The services of Mr. C. V. Stephens, an irrigation expert who has recently retired from Madras Service, were obtained as consulting engineer, and while his primary duty was to investigate the important Chalakkudi Scheme he has also examined several other schemes which have been or are being investigated. A detailed survey of the entire area proposed to be benefitted by the Chalakkudi Irrigation Scheme had to be made and in view of the magnitude of the scheme, this has taken time. The investigation has just been completed and the estimating is now being done. Provided the approval of the Travancore Government is received in time, it is hoped to start execution of the scheme in September and a provision of Rs. 2½ lakhs has been made in the budget.

The Thottara Puncha Scheme after further detailed investigation was not proceeded with in its original form as it was decided that the lands were not suitable for two crops. An alternative scheme to safeguard the puncha crops from draughts and the ingress of salt water is under consideration and as Travancore is also concerned, consultation with that Government is now being carried on.

Closely connected with the original Thottara Puncha Drainage Scheme is a scheme to safeguard the adjoining kari nilams in the villages of Amballur and Keecheri. An estimate of Rs. 37,000 has been sanctioned for this scheme which will be carried out in 1119.

The important Kambalathara Reservoir Scheme costing Rs. 98,750 is to be taken up in 1119. The scheme provides for the conversion of the existing Kumbalathara Eri into a pucca Reservoir with a capacity of fifty million cubic feet.

Two other schemes designed to increase food production to be examined by Mr. Stephens are the Puthur River Diversion Scheme and the Thannikudam Scheme. A provision of Rs. 20,000 has been made in the budget for the former scheme. Schemes for encouraging the construction of private eries in Chittur Taluk and for converting part of the Conolly Canal into a fresh water canal are under examination. The Madras Government have not yet consented to the latter scheme.

Besides these major irrigation projects the Hon'ble Minister has carried through a heavy programme of minor irrigation works and has planned a further large programme for next year. Details of the progress made will no doubt be given in the Hon'ble Minister's speech.

Earthwork on the first section of the Chalakkudi Anamallais Road is almost complete and metalling and construction of bridges are in progress.

Progress in the important work of construction of groynes to prevent erosion in the coastal areas south of the harbour, has been retarded due to the heavy demand for stone for harbour and defence purposes, which has had to be given priority. However, breakwaters have been constructed protecting a mile of coast and boulders have been collected for protective works covering a further mile. A provision of Rs. 75,000 has been made in the budget for groynes covering a further two miles.

Under waterworks, there is a provision of Rs. 1,15,000 for maintaining and improving the water supply for the Cochin area. For Security reasons it is not possible to give details, but it may be said that the improvements proposed will secure an adequate and reliable supply.

A popular scheme to be undertaken during 1119 is the deepening of the Trichur navigation canals.

Applying the "inescapability" criterion, building work has been reduced to a minimum. The cost of maintaining roads has inevitably increased due to the great increase in the cost of labour and materials, but here too every possible economy has been exercised, the thickness of metal being reduced except on the important trunk roads.

SALT MANUFACTURE

In the Excise Department the most interesting development was the attempt to produce salt in the State. Despite most unfavorable weather conditions the experiment made at Malipuram by an experienced Salt Officer, obtained from Madras, showed that prospects were favourable. Endeavors are now being made to arrange for a local capitalist to take the area on lease and manufacture salt. Sales of abkari shops resulted in a striking increase of Rs. 7,35,811.

NATION BUILDING DEPARTMENTS

While first priority in respect of both endeavour and expenditure has to be given to measures designed to avert starvation, to maintain Law and Order and public morale and to help the war effort, keeping always in mind the necessity, as an anti-inflation measure to apply the "inescapability" criterion to all expenditure, it has proved possible to allot additional funds to nation-building departments, both to meet inevitable increases in expenditure due to war

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